

PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL

MINUTES OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

Present: Su Almeida, Tom Beall, Becky Bueno, Russell Carey, Crystal Gantz, Robert Kelley, Leeds Mitchell IV, Dan Moos, Joop Nagtegaal, Kim Noble, Jean Patiky, Earl Smith III, Andrea Summers

Absent: Leslie Brackett, Carrie Bridges-Feliz, Nick Figueroa, Alex Molina, Martha Newcomb, Abraham Pinales

Paul Cuffee Staff: Jon Conklin, Becky Coustan, Chris Haskins, Vivi Schultz, Sissela Tucker, Maria Palmgren

Call to Order

Mr. Russell Carey called the meeting to order at 6:11 pm and began with a moment of silence.

Mr. Carey asked that Trustees and staff introduce themselves. Following the introductions, Mr. Carey informed the board

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Kim Noble made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2016 meeting, seconded by Ms. Crystal Gantz, and the Board unanimously approved the motion.

PARCC Report

Mr. Chris Haskins, Ms. Becky Coustan and Ms. Vivi Schultz gave an update on the 2016 PARCC performance report. The School improved its overall scores in ELA/L and math by 7% and 9%, respectively, compared to the AY 2015 PARCC scores. Mr. Haskins reviewed the priorities which were established for AY 2015-2016 for K-12; emphasis on Common Core State Standards, including whole number operation and rational numbers; problem solving; vocabulary; and evidence-based text. Ms. Coustan explained the AY 2015-2016 priorities for the Lower School, which included explicit instruction on 12 high-impact vocabulary words; K-6 teachers having been trained in Add+Vantage/Math Recovery, with focus on whole number and operations; implemented full year of Writing in Science/science note-taking strategies; piloted Eureka Math (CCSS-aligned math curriculum) in grade 4; and increased ELL support by 60%. Mr. Haskins shared the AY 2015-2016 priorities for the Middle School, which included explicit instruction on Tier II words; SEAS (Skills, Enrichment, Arts Support) block for students needing additional instruction in reading and math; personalized learning through blended approach in math; Leveled Literacy Intervention targeted to small groups of students with focus on improving comprehension and fluency. Ms. Schultz reviewed the priorities for the Upper School, which included more personalized approach in math through blended learning; instituted mid-/and final term exams to improve student attitudes toward test taking; [US] staff review of school-wide data to bring awareness of student strengths and needs; and targeted math (Geometry) support after school.

Following the review of the Schools focus last year, Mr. Haskins, Ms. Coustan and Ms. Schultz reported on the School's plan on continuing to improve student learning. Measures include continuing to review data in order to identify areas of relative strengths and needs of students; prioritizing improvements in literacy, targeting explicit vocabulary instruction; advancing the CCSS curriculum across K-12 grades. Lower School will concentrate on coherent CCSS-aligned math curriculum across grades K-5; systematic, explicit phonemic awareness and phonics programs in grades K-2 (incorporating grade 3 in AY 2016-2017); gradual increase of educational technology through blended approach; Library/Media Specialist incorporating keyboarding instruction. Middle School will expand the Leveled Literacy Intervention; adding one new science unit; adopting CCSS-aligned curriculum in Humanities, including utilizing Chromebooks for blended approach; and continuing working on blended learning for a more effective approach in math. Upper School has instituted DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) twice weekly; expanded after-school targeted assistance for students demonstrating need; READ 180 program; increased its AP courses from four to eight; adjusted schedules so teachers are allotted more time to collaborate around student needs.

Charter Renewal

Mr. Haskins informed the Board that the School's renewal application would be due this year. He explained that RIDE had not yet released

the charter-renewal application, but based on the last renewal, he expects that the School will be renewed with the same RIDE recommendation (“Typical”) as the last renewal.

Charter Expansion

Mr. Haskins relayed to the Board that RIDE had issued a RFP (Request for Proposal) for Charter School Expansion. He explained that applying for expansion may be in the best interest of the School, and proposed for consideration two options:

- Adding one student per class across grades K-12, resulting in 39 additional students. This option would not require space re-configuration and/or hiring additional staff.
- Moving grades 6 to Lower School and adding one grade 7 class and one grade 8 class, resulting in 40 additional students at the Middle School. This option would require space re-configuration at the Lower and Middle school, as well as hiring additional staff.

After discussing both options, the Board agreed that adding one student per class across grades K-12 on a gradient level would be preferable, as it would be less disruptive than adding two full classes in grades 7 and 8. The Board agreed that the School apply for expansion as such and, were the request to be approved, the School could reserve the option of whether to incorporate said expansion.

Head of School’s Report

HOS report was incorporated into over-all reports.

Committee Reports

CoTaG

Mr. Earl Smith III informed the Board that the Committee discussed on-boarding/training for Trustees; the development of a plan for the Trustee-President successor; and using the Strategic Plan as a guide-post for ongoing discussions at the Board meetings.

Finance Committee

Ms. Kim Noble gave an update on matters discussed at the Finance Committee.

Plant & Property Committee

Mr. Carey informed the Board that the Plant & Property Committee had met to discuss whether to explore purchasing the Upper and Middle School buildings. After a lengthy discussion, the Plant & Property Committee recommended that the School continue its current arrangements with the City of Providence and St. Mary's Church, and to not pursue purchasing options for either building at this time.

Executive Session - RIGL§ 42-46-5(a)(2)(litigation exception)

Mr. Carey made an open call announcing that the Board would move into executive session as per RIGL§ 42-46-5(a)(2)(litigation exception) and made a motion to hold the executive session closed and to keep the minutes of the executive session sealed, Ms. Kim Noble seconded

the motion and the Board unanimously voted to go into closed executive session and keep the minutes of the executive session sealed. The Board Trustees, Mr. Haskins and Ms. Maria Palmgren were present, all others were excused.

There was one vote taken during the executive session, in which the Board approved the minutes of the executive session held on June 16, 2016.

Upon conclusion of the executive session, Mr. Carey made a motion to resume the open meeting. Mr. Smith III seconded the motion and the Board unanimously voted to resume the open meeting.

The minutes of the executive session are kept sealed in the Office of the Head of School.

Adjournment

There being no further business coming before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Maria Palmgren